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News Release

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Two Minnesota men indicted on child pornography charges

Attorney General Michael Mukasey recently highlighted the Department of Justice's efforts against child pornography at the Project Safe Childhood National Conference in St. Louis, and those efforts continue in Minnesota as two men were indicted last week on child pornography charges.

Adrian Preston Campbell, 46, Minneapolis, was charged Dec. 11 with one count of attempted distribution of child pornography and with one count of possession of child pornography. Campbell's indictment alleges that on June 22, 2006, he knowingly attempted to distribute child pornography.

The indictment also alleges that on July 14, 2006, Campbell knowingly possessed images of child pornography that had been transported by means of a computer.

If convicted, Campbell faces a potential maximum penalty of 20 years in prison on the distribution charge and 10 years on the possession charge. All sentences are determined by a federal district court judge.

This case is the result of an investigation by the Minneapolis Police Department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Richard Newberry.

In a separate indictment filed on Dec. 11, but was unsealed Dec. 18, Joel Leslie Wells, 49, Eagan, was charged with one count of possession of child pornography and one count of receipt of child pornography.

Wells's indictment alleges that on Dec. 30, 2004, he knowingly and intentionally possessed in an electronic format at least 131 images of minors engaging in sexually explicit conduct. The images were maintained on the hard-drive of Wells's computer.

The indictment also alleges that from August 2004 through September 2004 Wells traded images of minors engaging in sexually explicit conduct with others using an Internet-based e-mail account.

If convicted, Wells faces a potential maximum penalty of 40 years in prison on the receipt charge and 20 years on the possession charge. All sentences are determined by a federal district court judge.

This case is the result of an investigation by the FBI, the Dakota County Sheriff's Office, and the Eagan Police Department, and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Michelle E. Jones.

Both of these cases are part of Project Safe Childhood (PSC), a national initiative that encourages the use of multi-jurisdictional task forces to investigate and prosecute cases that involve the sexual exploitation of children over the Internet. PSC urges that law enforcement efforts be complemented by community-wide campaigns to assist victims of exploitation and to educate parents, other adults, and children about Internet safety.

According to the U.S. Department of Justice, one in 33 children receives an unwanted sexual solicitation online each year. One in four children experiences unwanted exposure to sexually explicit material on the Internet each year. And, more than 20,000 images of child pornography are posted on the Internet every week. Moreover, recent research conducted by the Federal Bureau of Prisons indicates a strong correlation between possessing or distributing child pornography and committing sexual-contact crimes against children.

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An indictment is a determination by a grand jury that there is probable cause to believe that offenses have been committed by the defendant. The defendant, of course, is presumed innocent until he or she pleads guilty or is proven guilty at trial.